



May 2019

ILRI in Ethiopia

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) was created in 1994 from a merger of the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA—based in Ethiopia) and the International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases (ILRAD—based in Kenya). ILRI is co-hosted by the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya; the Addis Ababa campus hosts more than a dozen international agricultural research and development institutes as well as ILRI. Since 1974, ILCA then ILRI worked on many livestock issues including: pastoral livelihoods, animal genetics and breeding, livestock policy, value chains, animal diseases, animal feeding, innovation systems and livestock-water productivity. Today, ILRI research in Ethiopia focuses on:

- Sustainable intensification of mixed crop–livestock systems through increasing productivity and value chain development
- Reduced vulnerability through market development, risk mitigation and livelihood diversification.

In Ethiopia, ILRI works with national organizations to achieve the aims of the government's Growth and Transformation Plan and the Ministry of Agriculture's Agricultural Growth Program. These national partners include federal ministries and research institutes, universities, regional state government offices and research institutes, NGOs, the private sector, local communities and their representatives as well as development projects.

ILRI is one of 15 global CGIAR research centres dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Most CGIAR research for development activities are conducted through a series of multi-partner CGIAR Research Programs and Platforms and these set the direction, institutional partnerships and opportunities for most of ILRI's research. ILRI is involved in several of these research programs—Livestock, Agriculture for Nutrition and Health, and Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security—and the Genebank Platform. The institute also contributes to the Grain Legumes and Dryland Cereals and Policies, Institutions and Markets research programs and to the Big Data in Agriculture and Excellence in Breeding platforms. Ethiopia is one of the focus countries of the ILRI-led CGIAR research program on Livestock where ILRI and partners are working on sheep and goat value chains.



ILRI projects in Ethiopia implemented with partners

African dairy genetic gains

This project seeks to provide better dairy cattle to smallholder farmers in Africa. The program supports a farmer-focused partnership that records and disseminates on-farm productivity and genetic information on dairy cattle in Tanzania and Ethiopia. The data generated will be synthesized and used by farmers to manage their herds and improve cow management, leading to sustained animal and herd productivity gains, as well as increased smallholder dairy farmer incomes. The resulting genetic gains will potentially increase productivity and profitability hence transform the lives of millions of dairy families.

African chicken genetic gains

This project seeks to provide better chickens to smallholder farmers in Africa by improving chicken genetics and the delivery of adapted chickens to support poverty reduction, productivity growth, increased household animal protein intake, and the empowerment of women farmers in rural communities. Beyond the target countries—Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania—the germplasm, data, and knowledge generated have the potential to impact millions of rural and peri-urban households elsewhere.

Africa RISING: Transforming African agriculture through sustainable intensification

This project creates opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition and income security and conserve or enhance the natural resource base. In Ethiopia, the main aim of the project is to identify and validate solutions to the problems experienced by smallholder crop-livestock farmers.

Dryland restoration scaling

This project develops tools and analysis to measure success in restoring degraded land for use in sustainable crop-livestock farming, helping improve food security and livelihoods of smallholders in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali and Niger.

N2Africa: Putting nitrogen fixation to work for smallholders

This project aims to increase biological nitrogen fixation and productivity of grain legumes among African smallholder farmers, contributing to enhanced soil fertility and increase supply of quality livestock feed, which in turn help improve household nutrition and increased cash income. The legacy will be strong national expertise in grain legume production and N2-fixation research and development. The capacity built will sustain the pipeline and delivery of continuous improvement in legume production technologies tailored to local settings.

Ethiopia livestock master plan

ILRI supported the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MoLF) to develop a livestock master plan (LMP) to inform its development investment planning, as well as inform the strategies of donors and private investors in Ethiopia. ILRI is now engaging with the government of Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation Agency using the recommendations from the LMP to create plans for clusters of local districts. The LMP is a series of five-year development roadmaps for key livestock value chains, with specific strategies and timed activity plans.



IBLI: Creating resilience through index-based livestock insurance

This project is designed to protect pastoralists against drought-related livestock losses through contract holders who receive payouts when forage condition deteriorates below a certain level. Payouts are calculated automatically and there are no claims to file—resolving issues of moral hazard and adverse selection and ensuring at-risk pastoralists are better able to cope when drought conditions put their livestock assets at risk.

Designing community-based breeding strategies for indigenous sheep breeds

This project aims to improve the productivity and income of resource-poor sheep producers by providing access to improved animals that respond to improved feeding and management, facilitating the targeting of specific market opportunities.

Forage genebank

ILRI genebank conserves almost 19,000 accessions of forages from over 1,000 species. It is one of the most diverse collections of forage grasses, legumes and fodder tree species in any genebank and it includes the world's major collection of African grasses and tropical highland forages. Alongside conservation activities, research is carried out to characterize forage resources for use as livestock feeds. Recent work has focused on diversity in Rhodes grass, Napier grass, lablab and cowpea.

Livestock: Transforming small ruminant value chains

ILRI partners with ICARDA in implementing a CGIAR small ruminant value chain transformation program in eight sites across Ethiopia. The CGIAR research program on livestock works to increase the productivity of small-scale livestock systems in sustainable ways, making animal-source foods more available and affordable to poor consumers.

Innovation Lab on Small-Scale Irrigation

This project is being implemented in Ethiopia, Ghana and Tanzania where it works to enhance food security and reduce poverty by introducing gender-sensitive, small-scale irrigation systems into food and agriculture production on small farms. Such irrigation schemes may support production of high value crops including forages for livestock.

Feed the Future Innovation lab for livestock systems

Lack of good-quality, year-round feed for livestock is one of the greatest constraints to livestock production in the developing world. The ILRI component of this project seeks to improve the quality of animal feed available to smallholder farmers in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. It seeks to enhance productivity of food-producing farm animals not to only increase the quality and quantity of milk, meat and eggs available to smallholders to consume, but also through sales of those high-value foods and animals, to improve their livelihoods.

Agriculture to nutrition project

The Agriculture to Nutrition (ATONU) project seeks to help the African continent broaden its agricultural focus from 'eating for hunger' to 'eating for health'. It focuses on how agriculture can deliver positive nutritional outcomes for smallholder farming families through the implementation of robust, evidence-based nutrition-sensitive interventions. Working closely with the African Chicken Genetic Gains project, ATONU operates in 40 villages in Ethiopia and Tanzania. Project interventions target 1,600 women and young children in the first 1,000 days of the children's lives—where high nutritional demands of pregnancy, development and early childhood must largely be met through food grown, or income earned, on family farms in the two countries.

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works with partners worldwide to:

1. Develop, test, adapt and promote science-based practices that—being sustainable and scalable—achieve better lives through livestock.
2. Provide compelling scientific evidence in ways that persuade decision-makers—from farms to boardrooms and parliaments—that smarter policies and bigger livestock investments can deliver significant socioeconomic, health and environmental dividends to both poor nations and households.
3. Increase capacity among ILRI's key stakeholders and the institute itself so that they can make better use of livestock science and investments for better lives through livestock.

ILRI leads the CGIAR Research Program on Livestock, leads a component of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health on food safety, and contributes to several other CGIAR research programs and platforms. ILRI is the co-founder, with the African Union/New Partnership for Africa's Development Planning and Coordination Agency, of the Biosciences Eastern and Central Africa Hub (BecA-ILRI Hub) on its Nairobi campus where world-class facilities for biotechnology research are in use by ILRI, other international centres and many national partners. The platform increases access to advanced laboratories for African and international scientists conducting research on African agricultural challenges. ilri.org

Partners in Ethiopia

Agricultural Transformation Agency, Addis Ababa University, Amhara Regional Agricultural Research Institute, Eden Field–Agri Seed Enterprise, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, Ethiopian Meat and Dairy Industry Development Institute, Hawassa University, Ministry of Agriculture, Oromia Agricultural Research Institute, Southern Agricultural Research Institute, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, Tigray Agricultural Research Institute, University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Wollega University and Yabello Pastoral and Dryland Agriculture Research Centre.

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livestock.cgiar.org/focus/ethiopia



The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works to improve food security and reduce poverty in developing countries through research for better and more sustainable use of livestock. ILRI is a CGIAR research centre. It works through a network of regional and country offices and projects in East, South and Southeast Asia, and Central, East, Southern and West Africa. ilri.org



CGIAR is a global agricultural research partnership for a food-secure future. Its research is carried out by 15 research centres in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. cgiar.org

<https://www.ilri.org/where-we-work/eastern-and-southern-africa/ethiopia>

ILRI thanks all donors and organizations which globally supports its work through their contributions to the [CGIAR Trust Fund](#).

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